



**Edition # 3 – July 31, 2009**

## **Fellows gain new perspective on Baltimore's Immigrant Outreach and Criminal Justice**

The Mayoral Fellows traveled up Interstate 83 to the DLA Piper law firm in Mount Washington to hear from two individuals at the forefront of both law and law enforcement. The speakers were Baltimore Police Commissioner Frederick H. Bealefeld III and Rod Rosenstein, the U.S. Attorney for Maryland, whose work has taken him from Alabama to California, and even San Juan.



Part of Rod Rosenstein's duties involves fighting against public corruption. Rosenstein enjoys government, where he can make a true difference, above private law practice, where attorneys must work to advance the individual interest of the client. Furthermore, the government provides more opportunities for Rosenstein to leverage his legal expertise in the field rather than in the private practice. He was one of the prosecutors in the Whitewater investigation.

Rosenstein came to Maryland as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. Now the top federal prosecutor in the state, he has worked to integrate federal, state, and local law enforcement in order to increase public safety. He is a proud member of Maryland's EXILE project, where Federal Prosecutors work to get the most dangerous criminals off our streets with heftier sentences. With the use of Federal sentencing, criminals will do their prison time in a Federal prison, typically located away from their contacts and associates. The EXILE program monitors certain repeat offenders with a propensity towards violent crime. When a violation of probation or parole is committed, the EXILE team works with the offender's Parole Officer to ensure that the violation is noted and action is taken to obtain an

arrest warrant.

Baltimore Police Commissioner Bealefeld has been an officer for 28 years, since the age of 19. He comes from a family with a rich law enforcement background, particularly within the Baltimore City Police Department. He has spent a large portion of his career as an officer fighting the drug war. Now the head of the Baltimore Police Department, he is adopting a new strategy to fight the drug problem. "I've seen every conceivable angle of the drug war. There has to be a smarter way," Bealefeld notes. His solution: targeting "bad guys with guns." After a 20-year low in murders last year, he plans to continue with this method of crime reduction. Bealefeld has looked nationally at other gun control models, such as New York City, and supports the idea of a gun offender registry implemented in Baltimore. The most violent offenders are then the priority targets for action by the criminal justice system. Officers on the street may be getting new technology as well: Pocket Cop is an application for the Blackberry platform that allows an officer to perform many of the duties limited to their in-car computer or dispatch. This both allows officers to have a better presence outside patrol cars, and frees up dispatchers as well.



The fellows traveled to the Adelante Familia facility in East Baltimore for a Speaker Series hosted by Renee Samuels, Director of International and Immigrant Affairs. Some of Mrs. Samuels' duties include coordinating international interactions on behalf of Baltimore City. Examples include hosting international visitors and delegates, working with sister cities and providing services for immigrants living in Baltimore.

Over a great Peruvian lunch, the fellows heard from Flor Justi, Director, and Blanca Picasso, Program Manager for Adelante Familia. The center works with the immigrant and Spanish-speaking populations to provide assistance to domestic violence victims. They spoke about the particular cultural challenges facing female victims, as well as the legal issues surrounding immigration when women come forward for help. Domestic violence is a problem in Maryland, with 75 deaths attributed to it.

The Mayoral Fellows also heard from Kevin Meadowcroft, manager of the Refugee Program at the Baltimore Resettlement Center. The center provides refugee services and assigns a case manager for eight months until newly arrived refugees are self-sufficient. Refugees arrive from places such as Iraq, Burma, and Nepal. The refugees are allowed in the program after they are granted asylum. The center also has a state-funded program called the Refugee Youth Project. The center goes to great lengths to provide a hospitable experience for these children, including visits to the Walter Art Museum twice a month to create art displayed in the museum. Baltimore was once the second largest Point of Entry in the United States.

## Mayoral Fellow has a Healthy Interest in Baltimore City



Jody Sheely is originally from Omaha, Nebraska, but she has been a Baltimore City resident for six years. She graduated from the University of Virginia in 2001 with a major in English. To help pay for her education, Jody worked as a personal trainer and aerobics instructor. Ultimately, her passion for wellness inspired her to leave a career in fundraising and return to graduate school at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she is now pursuing her Master of Public Health. She learned of the fellowship through her school, reflecting, "I've lived in Baltimore City for about six years, I love the city and I was really interested in the opportunity to work within the city."

Jody has an interest in both public service and worksite wellness. In the future, she "would love if there were an opportunity to tie the two together." As a fellow, she works with Recreation and Parks where she is attempting to create a centralized database for users of all Recreation and Parks facilities. It is a "major undertaking" with over 55 recreation centers and other special facilities, including the numerous city-wide events Recreation and Parks organizes. Another of Jody's responsibilities is to pay attention to marketing opportunities. The database can be used to track facility usage, and to market to audiences interested in Recreation and Parks programs. Jody states that the database will be "able to look at what programs audiences want and respond to those needs."

In addition to Recreation and Parks, Jody takes part in her own forms of recreation. She is enjoying downtown life and being close to the Inner Harbor. She also enjoys an active lifestyle, whether it's walking her two dogs, running, or doing yoga.

Jody also learned from the Speaker Series. Chris Thomaskutty, Deputy Mayor, was "clearly really passionate" and addressed some of the bureaucratic issues inherent in city operations. "It was reassuring to know that [high-ranking officials] know of those hardships for the rest of city employees." It encouraged Jody to continue to work hard to overcome those difficulties. This week's speaker, Donald Fry, President of the Greater Baltimore Committee, also affected Jody. "I was really interested in the GBC as a city resident to hear their vision for the city." She remarked that she was "happy that there is an independent entity that can bring together the powers that be in City government and business while using alternative methods of problem solving."

She loves the opportunities the fellowship provides such as the Baltimore Police ride-along and the Speaker Series. "The thing that has thrilled me the most about the fellowship has been the access and the understanding I've gained about Baltimore City government," Jody reflected. With programs such as Be Fit Baltimore, One-Plus-One, and the initiative for a greener Baltimore, Jody appreciates that "this administration has emphasized the health of the city and its citizens."



## California Native finds 2<sup>nd</sup> home on the other side of the country

Los Angeles native Rakesh Raghuwanshi is getting a crash course in how government operates in his first experience in public service through the Fellows Program. Rakesh is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University, where he received his Masters of Public Health.

This summer, Rakesh is working in the Health Department on two projects that will increase efficiency within the department. His major project was to create a grant management system that would ensure the department is meeting all the requirements that come with grant funding. Currently, 85% of the Health Department's funding comes from grants, and it is important to "strictly follow" the grant requirements to keep the funding and receive future grants. In order to prepare for this, he read a book and taught himself Microsoft Access. He created a system that provides easy access in a database that has "everything you need to know about any grant," according to Rakesh. Now that the system is created, Rakesh is conducting a training session for the fiscal unit of the Health Department in order to teach them how to use the database. The goal of the database is to "change from retrospective to prospective action." It will be used to ensure that the department is up to date or ahead of anything it needs to do according to the grant, rather than running the risk of failing to meet requirements or not turning in forms or applications on time.

The second project Rakesh is working on is to increase understanding and transparency of the procurement process in the Health Department. The goal is to limit mistakes and prevent a waste of resources. Many overlook the severity of consequences that may arise from not following the process. Simply signing a paper to purchase a box of pens, if not approved through the correct process, can result in fraud charges against the parties involved. Rakesh created a document that explains the process step-by-step, detailing who should receive the application from start to finish. At some point, the document will be placed online for city-wide implementation for all agencies to use.

Rakesh has plans to "bridge the gap between science and policy." With the increase in government regulation in scientific advances, there is a need for greater knowledge between the fields. Scientists, according to Rakesh, may not understand the reasons for certain policies that affect them and government officials may not understand the impact their policies have on scientists and their research. Prior to this summer, his experience was only in the private sector. Working in the health department has increased the respect he has for government officials and public servants. He now realizes the extent to which he and many others "under-appreciate" government officials.

Rakesh wants to practice medicine and increase access to health care through public service at the



federal level. Like his colleague Warner McGee, featured in a previous newsletter, Rakesh plans to work in Public Health after practicing medicine in order to address health concerns for populations and not just individuals.

Rakesh loves that Baltimore has a “big city feel without the big city pressure.” He expressed that he enjoys not having to get dressed up just to go to the post office, as he did in Los Angeles. Through the program, he has learned valuable lessons and also attained a mentor in his supervisor Thomas Kim, Chief Financial Officer for the Health Department. After he attends medical school and completes his residency, Rakesh says the Fellowship Program has furthered his interest in making Baltimore his home.

## **Fellow Makes Dream to Help Baltimore’s Youth into Reality**

A lifelong Baltimore Resident, Jessica Turrall has a vested interest in Baltimore City. Jessica comes to the Fellowship with a degree in Psychology from Johns Hopkins University. She reflected on her experience at the school, saying, “The best part about Hopkins is that it taught me to love Baltimore. All the stress was worth it because I found my home; I found a place that I love and want to improve.”

After learning about the fellowship, Jessica felt that it was a perfect fit. “This is a way for me to get involved in communities in order to improve Baltimore. People want stable, predictable outcomes, and you have to work really hard when you want to make a great improvement in the community.” She is committed to providing much-needed programs to Baltimore City residents. In the future, Jessica hopes to start a nonprofit. She understands the challenges associated with doing so, but has no qualms because it “needs to be done.”



In the Baltimore City Mayoral Fellowship, Jessica works with Jean Lewis, Director of Ex-offender Reentry and Juvenile Justice. Jessica’s project involves the juvenile unit at the Baltimore City Detention Center (BCDC). “It’s a very unique population; the people are still minors, but are charged with adult crimes.” Jessica feels that these juveniles need to be mentored as opposed to sentenced to time in a jail cell and going to classes. A full 60% of BCDC students are released without mentoring, which leads to a high recidivism rate. “Perhaps these kids are doing crime again because in jail they are not learning to think differently.”

Jessica has a plan to address the issue. She is working to utilize case management services that will provide “individualized plans for life changing decisions” to BCDC youth. The services can range from family planning to recreation programs like acting and poetry. Her goal is to launch a pilot

program in September, working with ten youth to get them these services and see what the outcome is. Graduate students will assist the youth and record the success rate of the program, possibly leading to expanded efforts.

Jessica drew many lessons from the Speaker Series. Police Commissioner Bealefeld taught her that people should pick their passion, but focus small to achieve big. “The small focus allows you to branch out and affect change in other areas.” Jessica cited the Police Commissioner’s target of “Bad Guys with Guns” and compared it to working with the youth at BCDC. Donald Fry, President of the Greater Baltimore Committee inspired Jessica to look in all areas for help, not just those who typically work with people in the criminal justice system. “You must be able to enlist the help of those who may not fit the description but want to make a change.”

She also enjoys spending time with her family, being an active member in her church, roller-staking, and going to the mall. Mentoring is a big hobby of Jessica’s: “to meet someone, then to see them changed and to realize you had a small part in that makes you feel wonderful.”

Jessica added that Baltimore has a lot of opportunity for innovative thinking. She gave the example of Dr. Alonso, CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools, and his efforts to support charter schools and increase school accountability. “Because the mayor and her staff really care about the community, there is always room to listen to those who have ideas for change. I hope that the innovative thoughts behind my project will be recognized.”

## **Matt Lyons joins in the expanding effort to “Weatherize” Baltimore**

Matt Lyons from Montgomery County, Maryland recently received his Bachelor’s degree in Government and Politics and will complete his final year of a 5-year program to receive his Masters of Public Policy.



In the summer of 2007, he participated in the Governor’s Summer Internship Program, similar to the Mayoral fellows Program, where he worked on a project in the Department of Natural Resources; Office of Public Lands, Policy and Planning.

This summer, Matt is working with the Weatherization Assistance Program. His project seeks to expand the scope of its assistance to low-income residents throughout the city by providing energy upgrades such as insulation, furnace replacement, and ceiling upgrades to reduce energy costs. This initiative will improve the health and safety of the homes in the most hard-hit communities. Matt coordinated the Healthy Energy-Efficient Homes Taskforce, which will implement the plans to weatherize homes. Matt also provided oversight and input between the

different subcommittees. In addition to low-income homes, there is a focus on improving rental properties, and Matt's project evaluates which non-profit rental properties need assistance, and how the taskforce can provide that assistance.

The Weatherization Program has experienced substantial fiscal expansion in the last year. Their budget went from \$1.3 million to \$15.7 million due to stimulus grants. However, increased monetary resources alone are not the key to success. One of the challenges for Matt this summer is working with an increased budget with limited human resources; there simply is not enough manpower right now.

Matt plans to begin working in public service to affect policy once he receives his Masters degree. He enjoys working and being in Baltimore because of the diversity of the City. Although there are other diverse areas in the state, he feels Baltimore is inclusive of all cultures and that everyone "meshes" together.



## Upcoming Events

<b>July 15<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>July 22<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>July 29<sup>th</sup></b>
Speaker Series: CASA Maryland	Speaker Series: Greater Baltimore Committee, Donald Frye, President	Speaker Series: Media, Patrice Harris, Sen. Larry Young and David Nitkin

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